

## **Historic, Archive Document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



aE97  
.R47  
1990

Resource Apprenticeship Program for Students

# Program Guide



US Department of Agriculture



Forest Service

## General Information

**Funding Agency**

**Schools**

**Students**

**Families**

**Host Agency**

## **Background**

---

Education and employment data on Native Americans is discouraging, particularly in scientific and resource-related fields. In Alaska a high percentage of Native youths will not finish high school; those few who go to college will experience a 70% dropout rate in the freshman year. Native college students predominately major in human services fields such as health care, teaching, and business administration.

Federal agencies charged with managing many of Alaska's lands and resources have not achieved equitable representation of Alaska Natives in their workforces, especially in scientific and resource management occupations. The shareholders of Native cor-

porations own more than 44 million acres of land in Alaska, yet almost every resource specialist hired by the Native corporations is non-Native. U.S. colleges produce about 120 American Indian/Alaska Native graduates a year in resource-related fields. Only seven of those have advanced degrees.

The Resource Apprenticeship Program for Students (R.A.P.S.) was started in 1987 as a pilot project by the Bureau of Land Management's Arctic District to address some of these concerns. The Alaska offices of the National Park and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services joined the program in 1988. More agencies and schools get involved each year.

## **General Information**

**Funding Agency**

**Schools**

**Students**

**Families**

**Host Agency**



## Mission Statement

The purpose of the RAPS program is to foster an awareness of the importance of implementing sound natural resource management practices in rural Alaska. RAPS provides an opportunity for rural Alaska Native youth to obtain knowledge of, and experience in, resource management principles through employment and educational opportunities.

## Goals and Objectives

The program's long-range goal is for land management agencies to take an active role in helping Alaska Natives to become professional resource managers for both their own land and for public lands throughout the state. RAPS aims to foster a greater understanding of resource management concepts by rural Natives, provide career paths in resource management, and build a mutual appreciation of differing

cultural perspectives regarding the use and management of Alaska's natural and cultural resources.

The specific short term objectives of the RAPS program are to:

- identify and recruit Alaska Native high school juniors and seniors who may have an interest in resource management-related careers;
- act as a host employer in providing students with a variety of work and learning experiences in resource management,
- expose Native youth to the organization, mission, and management philosophies of government and non government land management agencies;
- provide support and encouragement for Native high school students seeking to enter and successfully complete a four-year college degree in resource-related fields;
- assist universities and colleges to recruit and provide financial support for Alaska Natives planning to major in scientific and resource-related fields.

## How the Program Works

RAPS is designed to work as a four-way cooperative effort by the "host" employer, the local school, families of the students selected, and the funding agent.

An important element of the program's design is that funding is provided by various Native non-profit corporations who act as contractors in distributing federal employment funds. These contractors pay student stipends, which range from \$5 to \$6 per hour. If the student is not from the local community, they also pay room and board and transportation to and from the duty station. This allows the host employer to participate without having to deplete scarce operating funds.

Host agencies will usually station the students in field locations rather than in centralized offices, so that the students will have an opportunity for hands-on work experience. Host agency RAPS coordinators

are given total responsibility for working with selected schools and communities to recruit suitable candidates. The schools are asked to refer juniors and seniors who have a satisfactory grade point average and a degree of maturity and initiative which would predict success in the work experience. School officials understand that the agency makes the final selection decisions from those candidates referred.

The host agencies also establish agreements with the appropriate non-profit Native corporations to set aside needed funds and assure that selected students meet any eligibility requirements. Host agencies assign supervisors and arrange for housing if needed.

**Funding Agency**

**Schools**

**Students**

**Families**

**Host Agency**





## **Expectations/Responsibilities**

Funding for the RAPS program may be from any of the following:

- Alaska Native non-profit corporations such as the Tlingit-Haida Central Council or Tanana Chiefs. These are authorized under P.L. 93-638 as contractors to the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

- The Bureau of Indian Affairs adult vocational education training funds

- Job Training Partnership Act, administered by the State of Alaska and Alaska Native non-profit corporations

- Private corporate funds

- Migrant Education Funds administered by the Alaska State Department of Education or other educational funds

- Other sources identified by host agencies

Student stipends, room and board and transportation expenses are the responsibility of the funding agency.

Funding agencies expect the host agency, student and host family to provide time and attendance records, progress reports, year-end reports and invoices/receipts for room and board expenses in a timely manner.

## **The Funding Agency's Role**

- To provide for student's stipend and room and board.
- To provide student with initial transportation to their work experience assignment and back to their home.
- To inform the student, host agency and host family of reporting requirements.

**Funding Agency**

**Schools**

**Students**

**Families**

**Host Agency**





## **Expectations/Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the high schools or school districts to inform students of the RAPS program, to make all literature pertaining to the program available to them, and throughout the school year to inform host agencies of potential candidates. Although participating host agencies are responsible for recruiting students, the schools are expected to assist students in applying for the program and will involve the student's parents in this process.

## **The School's Role**

- To designate a staff member to work with the host agency RAPS coordinator.
- To inform students of the RAPS program.
- To refer interested and qualified candidates to Host Agencies.
- To correlate student's work experience and academic studies in a manner which will expand the student's educational development.
- To furnish the host agency with requested information related to student's field of study and academic standing.
- To provide high school credit for the student, consistent with district policy.

**Schools**

**Students**

**Families**

**Host Agency**



## **Expectations/Responsibilities**

Each student selected to participate in RAPS will be assigned to one or more projects according to his/her interests and the projects available. A host agency RAPS coordinator will serve as the student's agency "adviser" or contact. The student will be responsible for reporting to the RAPS coordinator throughout the work experience and this individual will coordinate all aspects of the program.

At work, the student is expected to conduct himself/herself as a professional. The student's performance and conduct reflect not only on the student but also on the host agency, school and family. Appropriate dress and appearance are also expected.

Host families will provide housing. While in the field, students will be housed in tents or other camp facilities and supervision will be provided by a staff specialist.

Host families will establish basic house rules; students are expected to abide by and respect these rules. In the field, camp chores will be assigned by a work leader and are expected to be shared equally by everyone.

Students are encouraged to keep a journal of their experience and are required to submit a report to the host agency detailing their accomplishments at the end of their work experience.

## **The Student's Role**

- To adhere to the host agency's work schedule, policies and procedures.
- To inform supervisor and/or house parent of problems or worries.
- To keep host family and work leader informed of whereabouts and activities at all times.
- To ask questions and to learn from each assignment.
- To work diligently at each assignment.
- To keep a daily log of work activities.
- To submit a year-end report to the host agency detailing what was accomplished and how the program can be improved.
- To submit travel vouchers and paperwork immediately after each field trip.
- To assume personal responsibility for his/her actions.
- To write or call home regularly.

**Students**  
**Families**

**Host Agency**





## **Student's Family**

A major key to the success of the RAPS program is the family's involvement. Maintaining contact with the student, host family and host agency is of utmost importance.

For many of the RAPS students, this is their first time living away from home. Support and encouragement from the students' parents throughout the work experience can alleviate many of the fears or uncertainties which often can and will crop up.

To alleviate any concerns they may have, parents are encouraged to maintain contact with host agencies and host families.

## **Host Family**

Host families are an integral component of the RAPS program. Generally, one or more of the adult members of the host family are employed by the sponsoring resource management agency. Subsequently, their knowledge of and experience with resource management practices is an added element in the students' overall exposure to resource management principles.

## **Expectations/Responsibilities**

Host families are given \$20.00 a day subsistence allowance to cover students' room and board expenses. Host families are to provide breakfast, a sack lunch and dinner each day the student is in town. The transportation of the student to and from work is also the responsibility of the host family.

Host families are encouraged to discuss household rules with the students during the interview and upon their arrival. Students are expected to help around the house and to keep their room and bathroom clean. Host families will be aware of the students whereabouts at all times and establish reasonable curfew hours for weekdays and weekends. It is also expected that students will call if they are going to be home late.

Host families should know who to contact in case of an emergency. They should have the names and phone numbers of the host agency representative and the student's parents readily available. They should not hesitate to contact both parties if an emergency arises.

## **The Host Family's Role**

- If arranged by the host agency, to participate in the initial interview of the student in the student's home.
- To provide a safe, comfortable living environment for the student.
- To provide breakfast, a sack lunch and dinner each day the student is with them.
- To provide the student with transportation to and from work.
- To establish and enforce "house rules" as pertaining to household tasks and curfew.
- To abide by the parenting expectations of the student's parents.
- To know who to contact in case of an emergency.
- To maintain regular contact with the student's family.

**Families**

**Host Agency**





## Expectations/Responsibilities

Host agencies are responsible for providing students with meaningful and productive training and educational experiences in fulfillment of the basic premises of the RAPS Program. Transportation to all field sites as well as housing arranged through the recruitment of host families, is also provided by the host agency.

It is expected that the host agency will make every attempt to interview the student in his/her home and will be responsible for the selection of the student to participate in the program.

The host agency is also expected to attempt to arrange one expense-paid trip for the student's family to visit the host family and student as well as for providing transportation for one member of the host family to meet the student and the student's parents during the interview.

Because the host agency is accountable to the funding agency, host agencies must comply with all of the procedures of the funding agency for submitting accurate and timely progress reports, student time sheets, expense documentation, etc.

## The Host Agency's Role

- To provide guidance on established safety procedures, practices and requirements.
- To provide meaningful assignments with adequate training and supervision.
- To interview students, in their homes and select students to participate.
- To schedule volume and variety of work to keep student occupied and interested.
- To provide suitable housing and host families.
- To brief host families on the RAPS program policies and procedures and include them on student interview trips when possible. These trips will include transportation and per diem for the host families.
- To keep student's families informed on their children's welfare.
- To apprise funding agencies of student's progress and accomplishments.
- To train and/or brief work leaders on their duties and responsibilities to the student.
- To provide liability protection for host family.
- To identify funding agencies.
- To provide, when possible, one trip for the student's family to visit the host family. This trip is to include transportation and per diem for the student's family.
- To be certain that the student knows he or she will be terminated from the program and sent home immediately for using alcohol or drugs or for recurring disciplinary problems.

## Supervisors/Work Leaders

Managers and supervisors are responsible for designing work experience projects which will enhance both learning and a sense of accomplishment for the student. The projects may be quite varied and include a mixture of outdoor work in remote sites as well as work in a headquarters or district office. The general principles of the projects are to provide the student with exposure and experience in the many different activities which go into responsible resource management.

Host agency RAPS coordinators are responsible for orienting the student to the agency, explaining to them the work experience schedule and providing them with a job description. The job description should contain a concise description of the job duties or tasks necessary to meet the objectives within the time frames established.

Additionally, supervisors assigned to work with the RAPS program are entrusted with insuring that the field work leaders are trained and/or briefed on their duties and responsibilities to the RAPS participants.

Work leaders are responsible for explaining each work task to the student so that the student understands what is expected and why, and to ascertain that the student is indeed capable of doing the task.

Additionally, they are to have alternative work activities planned so that the student remains productive if a job is finished sooner than was anticipated. Work leaders are also expected to be certain that students know that they will be terminated from the program and sent home immediately for using alcohol or drugs or for recurring disciplinary problems.

If problems or incidents occur needing attention, the work leader will notify the supervisor who will immediately inform the RAPS coordinator.

Supervisors, with work leaders' input, will be asked mid-term and upon the completion of the student's work experience, to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the work experience from the host agency's perspective. In addition, the supervisor and work leader will be expected to evaluate the student's work performance, attitude and general behavior, as well.

The information obtained from the performance evaluations not only give students helpful feedback but is also useful to the organizations providing funding and to the host agency RAPS coordinators who review program accomplishments.





Some of the RAPS program sponsors include:



Bureau of  
Indian Affairs



**Alyeska pipeline**  
SERVICE COMPANY



**NANA REGIONAL CORPORATION, INC.**  
BOX 49  
KOTZEBUE, ALASKA 99752



1022387127

BLM-AK-AE-90-011-1400-970